

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 00852 290645Z

17

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 OMB-01 /065 W
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R 290607Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9981

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

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BEIRUT ALSO PASS USINT BAGHDAD FOR INFO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SHUM, IR

SUBJ: SHIA RELIGIOUS PROCESSIONS DURING MOHARRAM

IRANIAN RELIGIOUS PROCESSIONS AND RITUAL FLAGELLATION WHICH TOOK PLACE JANUARY 23 COMMEMORATING MARTYRDOM OF SHIA IMAM HOSSAIN WERE LARGEST AND MOST WIDESPREAD IN RECENT MEMORY. GOI DECISION TO PERMIT INCREASE IN SIZE AND NUMBER OF THESE DEMONSTRATIONS APPARENTLY INDICATES RELAXATION OF PREVIOUS RESTRICTIVE POLICY. PROCESSIONS WERE ACCOMPANIED BY POLICE WHO WERE UNDER ORDERS TO KEEP MARCHERS UNDER CLOSE SUPERVISION. PARADES OF MOURNERS AND FLAGELLANTS AND ATTENDANCE OF HIGH-LEVEL IRANIAN PERSONAGES AT RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES RECEIVED WIDE TV AND PRESS COVERAGE. THIS PUBLICITY APPEARS AT LEAST PARTIALLY DESIGNED TO BRING HOME TO POPULACE SHARP CONTRAST BETWEEN IRANIAN GOVERNMENT'S LIBERALIZED TREATMENT OF SHIA RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES AND IRAQ'S PERSECUTION AND MALTREATMENT OF ITS SHIA MINORITY, ACCOUNTS OF WHICH CONTINUE IN IRANIAN PRESS.

MIKLOS

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Authority: CunninFX
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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